NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

Vol. 50/No. 2

November 2006

PROFESSIONAL

Media Education Week
November 19-24, 2006

Up Front from the President

I can't remember ever seeing him in the school setting without his trademark three-piece suit and certainly, as I believe most people who worked with him did, I developed a respect for him. He had the air of an English headmaster that, to those who didn't work with him, may have conveyed an aloofness, but in reality he possessed a profound respect for learning, for our school, the students in that school and the teachers who taught those students. That was 27 years ago, and whatever growth I had as a young teacher I intuitively knew that a lot of it resulted from that administrator's approach to dealing with people.

My sometimes hard-earned lessons learned since those early years have taught me to value just how insightful that administrator was and to realize that maybe his approach to treating other people was/is indeed the most effective way.

Amidst the everyday demands of teaching over the past number of years I distinctly recall the occasional momentary sense of gratitude at being a citizen of a country that for seven years straight was rated as the best country in the world in which to live. Conversely, just recently, however, I learned that Canada was rated as the fourth worst country in the world in which to work. This rating was essentially based on the sense of dignity and respect that employees felt within the work environment. And, as somebody involved in the work of trying to create conditions that allow people to feel a sense of value in themselves when they enter the workplace, I am more than a little concerned.

Even before the work of our own Dr. David Dibbon or Dr. Lynda Younghusband, I was certainly more than aware, of course, of the demands placed on teachers and the resulting impact on both their professional and personal lives. I also know that there are raised levels of anxiety whenever change occurs and I know that for the past ten years or so the education system in this province has been hit with change after change after change as schools are amalgamated, as school boards are amalgamated and re-amalgamated, as new methods of educational delivery are introduced and new expectations and demands are placed on teachers. I know that a lot of the workplace problems can be explained as a result of these things. But do these things explain workplace problems like those faced by teachers, or why, as a country, we are rated so low? Perhaps some of the issues surrounding workplace satisfaction, in the midst of these changes, can be alleviated by practicing some old-fashioned respect all around.

We are told, for example, that employees have to feel that they are valued. When people feel valued they are more apt to feel satisfied with their jobs and they are more apt to go the extra mile which, in and of itself, can be value added. Over-worked people, as an example, don't have time to value themselves. They don't have time to model good behavior for others. They don't have time to examine their lives. So maybe we can contribute to raising the low job satisfaction rating of our country and our province by getting back to treating each other with dignity and respect. And in so doing we can empower each other to do the things that are necessary to feel that we are making valuable contributions to the society of which we are a part.

Kevin

THE bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop, Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Services

The Bulletin is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1.
Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582
e-mail: labrowne@nlta.nl.ca
Internet Address: www.nlta.nl.ca

Unless otherwise indicated, materials used in *The Bulletin* may be reproduced or broadcast without permission. Advertisements and/or notices of resources carried in this publication do not imply recommendation by the Association of the service or product.

Advertising inquiries should be directed to: Michelle Lamarche, Ext. 227
mlamarche@nlta.nl.ca

Subscription Rate: $16 per year.
For subscriptions and address changes contact Printing Services, Ext. 249.

Deadlines for material are:
December Issue: November 1
Jan/Feb Issue: January 2

ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.

Printed on Recycled Paper

CONTENTS

Features

10 **Benefits & Economic Services**
Results from the Ad Hoc Committee on Substitute Teachers
by Stefanie Tuff

12 **Your Collective Agreement**
Recent Arbitration Decisions: Consideration for Replacement and Susbtitute Teachers
by Stefanie Tuff

14 *The Use of Sick Leave After Childbirth*
by Stefanie Tuff

15 **Hats Off!**
Dr. Otto Tucker Named to Order of Canada

16 **Living Well**
Be Active, if Only for the Health of It!
by Kathy Taylor-Rogers

18 **Professional Development**
Project Overseas 2006
Dispatches: From the Warm Heart of Africa
by Fred Wood

21 *Sharing the Journey: A Tribute to a Wonderful Travelling Companion*
by Beverley Park

22 *Vancouver's World Peace Forum: Working Together to End War and Build a Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World*
by Gary Noel & Keith Samuelson

25 **In the Classroom**
Playing the Game: Using Games to Stimulate Learning
by Sharon Peach

26 **Reflections**
Can You Tell Your Story?
by Leslie L. Kennedy

28 **Canadian Teachers' Federation**
Beyond the Bake Sale: Exposing the Many Faces of Commercialism in Public Schools

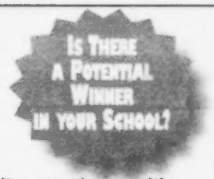
30 **Health Matters**
District Smoke-Free School Grounds Policy

31 **Applying for Educational Leave 2007-08**

Departments

Up Front from the President	2
On Location News	4
In Memoriam	8
Calendar	*back cover*

NLTA AWARDS 2006-07



Each year your Association honours several of its members with four prestigious awards. Please take a moment to read about them. If you feel that someone within your school qualifies for nomination for one of these awards for the 2006-07 school year, please contact your school representative who will forward the name and information on this person to your branch president or the appropriate special interest council president.

Special Recognition Award

This award was instituted by Johnson Incorporated to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the NLTA. It is presented annually to an active or life member of the Association who, while a teacher in the province, has made a major contribution to the **cultural, social and/or community life** of Newfoundland and Labrador. The award recognizes contributions in the areas of the arts (music/literature/visual arts), community service, and/or municipal politics. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

Allan Bishop Award

This Award was also established during the NLTA Centennial Year to recognize outstanding service to NLTA at the **provincial** level and it is named after former NLTA President and long-time staff member, Allan Bishop. The award is open to any active or life member of the Association, except that current members of the Provincial Executive are ineligible for the award and a provincial past president is ineligible for the award within three years of his/her presidency. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

Bancroft Award

This award, named in honour of James Frederick Bancroft, the first president of the NLTA, was established in 1980 during the 90th anniversary of the Association. The award was established to recognize the outstanding service given to **branches** by the dedicated and talented teachers whose efforts have helped make NLTA the strong association it is today. Nominations must come from branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

Barnes Award

This award was established in 1987 and is named for Dr. Arthur Barnes, a long-time supporter of the Association, who, in 1920, became the first Minister of Education. The award was established to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the special interest council level. Nominations must come from special interest councils or branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

ST. JOHN'S

NLTA PD Officer retires

René Wicks

René Wicks has retired from his position as Administrative Officer, Professional Development, with the NLTA. René joined the staff of the NLTA in January 1998 and spent the past nine years as an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division.

During his years with the Association, René shared responsibilities for developing and implementing the NLTA's Professional Development program. This included delivering workshops to teachers throughout the province, coordinating the operation of NLTA Special Interest Councils (particularly the more recent work involved with the Council restructuring), representing the Association and teachers on various multi-party committees and working groups (working in collaboration with the Department of Education, MUN Faculty of Education, school districts, etc.), working on curricula and professional issues through the Association's standing committees on Curricula and Professional Issues in Teaching, and representing the NLTA on various partnership projects (e.g. Parks Canada Summer Institute, Sharing Our Cultures). René also had the lead role in the preparation of the proposal and application for federal funding towards the establishment of the Virtual Teacher Centre.

René has taken up a new position as Project Coordinator for the Killick Centre (Community-University Research Alliance project) at Memorial University. This Centre is a federally funded five-year project to foster innovative research, training and the creation of new knowledge in the area of e-learning.

We offer René a sincere thank you for his nine years of excellent work in teacher Professional Development and wish him all the best in his new position.

George Tucker

NLTA appointment

The Provincial Executive Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is pleased to announce the appointment of George Tucker to the position of Administrative Officer, Professional Development.

George has been an educator in this province for some 26 years, working as a teacher, vice-principal, principal and program specialist. He is currently a program development specialist (primary education) with the Department of Education, where his main responsibilities include developing primary curriculum, supporting and assisting teachers in implementing new K-3 curriculum, and planning and facilitating PD workshops and institutes for teachers. George was one of the founding Executive members of the NLTA Elementary Special Interest Council and he has served as an executive member and president of the School Administrators' Council (both provincially and regionally). He has also been an executive member of the Canadian Association of Principals and served as its president in 2001-02. His NLTA involvement also includes service as a school representative, branch executive member, branch president and delegate to the NLTA BGM. George has a wide range of experience in teacher professional development through conducting presentations to teachers and assisting teachers in implementing new initiatives, programs and curricula.

In his new position, George will share responsibility for the development and implementation of the Association's Professional Development program.

BAY DE VERDE

School takes a hike

On Friday, September 29, as part of their "Healthy Commotion" celebrations, the entire student body, teachers, and several parents of Tricon Elementary in Bay de Verde hiked to the top of Merrymeeting Hill – a hike of 1.6 kilometers. Merrymeeting Hill is behind the school and approximately 550 feet above sea level. Once participants reached the top of the hill, their principal, Mrs. Wendy Tizzard, shared the story, *What Are You So Grumpy About!*, with the assembled group. Tricon Elementary's Media Committee (Donna Barrett, Cathie Hicks, and Gillian Noonan) said it was a beautiful day and Baccalieu Island was clearly visible in the background. "We even enjoyed the presence of a grouse!" they reported. A weekly hike, weather permitting, to the top of Merrymeeting Hill is a part of Tricon Elementary's growth and improvement plan.

Students, teachers and parents enjoy the view from atop Merrymeeting Hill.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Medal winner announced

Jennifer Snow of Clarke's Beach has been awarded the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Medal for the 2006 Spring Convocation at Memorial University. Jennifer convocated this past May with a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary). She completed her internship at Mary Queen of the World School in Mount Pearl. She is currently a Grade 6 Intensive French Teacher at St. Edward's in Kelligrews.

While at Memorial University, Jennifer was on the Dean's list for the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts. From 2004-06 she was President of MUN's Education Society as well as Undergraduate Representative Faculty Council, Faculty of Education. Jennifer was also a participant in the 2004 and 2005 Leadership Forum at Memorial and a Social Representative of MUN's Education Society (2003-04).

The NLTA Medal is awarded annually to a student enrolled in the Faculty of Education who, during his/her academic career, has made an outstanding contribution to the Faculty of Education and to the University. The recipient must be a graduating student and have a consistently good academic record in the professional courses required for the degree. The award is made by Memorial University on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

NLTA President, Kevin Foley, presents Jennifer Snow with her NLTA medal.

NLTA Scholarship awarded

Stephanie Chaulk of Elliston has been named 2005-06 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Scholarship. Stephanie is currently completing her Bachelor of Education degree (Primary/Elementary) with a focus area in English. At the present, she is completing her internship at Matthew Elementary in Bonavista.

The NLTA Scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of academic excellence and character to a senior student enrolled in the Faculty of Education. The scholarship, valued at $750, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

Stephanie Chaulk

Arts and Letters Contest

Robyn Tilley of Queen Elizabeth High in Foxtrap is one of 17 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 who were awarded certificates of achievement, together with cash prizes of $200 in the 2006 Newfoundland Labrador Arts and Letters Contest. Young musicians, artists and writers from all across the province are encouraged to enter the 2007 contest. The deadline is February 16, 2007. For more information and guidelines see www.gov.nf.ca/artsandletters.

Robyn Tilley

Ella Manuel Award winner announced

Jessica Kearley

The recipient of the Ella Manuel Award for 2006 is Jessica Kearley, a Grade 12 student at Holy Spirit High School in Manuels, Conception Bay South. Jessica was selected from many excellent applications received from high schools around the province.

This is the twenty-first year in which the award has been given in memory of Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, peace activist and feminist Ella Manuel. The awards are made to young women graduating from high schools around the province to assist in their further education.

Jessica is the editor of her school newspaper, a fundraiser for local and international charities, and a keen supporter of women's rights. She plans to major in biology at Memorial University.

3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Blast Off!

Last June, four lucky teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador enjoyed a splendid weeklong adventure at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Open to elementary and middle school teachers, the Space Academy for educators was an amazing success. Expenses, including flights, meals and lodging were covered by Honeywell in their commitment to support science and math education programs designed to help teachers inspire students to pursue careers in science, math, engineering and technology.

Robert Major (Pasadena Academy), Cherry Harbin (St. Peter's Academy), Darren Hutchings (Templeton Academy) and Michael Tobin (Roncalli Elementary) participated in professional development from June 21-28 at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. They represented Newfoundland and Labrador (very well, indeed) within a world-class group of educators: nearly 200 elementary/middle school teachers from 19 countries and 43 U.S. states.

Each day was packed full of activities to take back to the classroom. The teachers were able to participate in most of the simulations and experiences that Space Camp had to offer. During the week, the participants were divided into six teams, with each team consisting of 15-16 international members. Activities included solid fuel rocketry, bottle rockets, Martian math, and hydroponics. Discussions centered around space-related topics, including an interesting talk through NASA on what toys work in space. Training missions also took place through simulations aboard replicas of the space shuttles.

Three guest presenters passed on their knowledge and experience to all participants. Konrad Danneburg discussed the evolution of rocket engines, while relating stories of life in Germany during and after the war. Story Musgrave, a six-time astronaut, gave his personal perspective of space travel. Ed Buckbee recounted various exploits of the early American astronauts and other prominent personalities during his career as a press agent for the space program.

With the week completed and a graduation ceremony underway, awards were presented to various teachers. Michael Tobin received one of only six 'Right Stuff' awards presented. Congratulations again to Michael. The Space Academy offered a multitude of materials to the teachers as they returned home from a busy schedule.

Delayed flights and lost luggage aside, neither this experience nor the comrades made, will be easily forgotten. Darren Hutchings was impressed when Mr. Buckbee pointed out that someone from grade 6-8 now, would be the first person to walk on Mars.

Cherry Harbin said, "The experience at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center gave me the opportunity to teach my science and math in ways that I never did before. It was an experience I will never forget!"

The motto for future space explorations is simply, "It's time to take another walk."

l-r: Robert Major, Darren Hutchings, Cherry Harbin, Michael Tobin

You are encouraged to visit www.spacecamp.com and go for launch. Visit Honeywell's site: www.honeywell.com/sites/hhs/ and click on Honeywell Educators at Space Academy Program. The week at Space Camp was truly an experience of a lifetime. The 2007 Honeywell Educators Space Academy application is now available on their website. Similar to last summer, they will sponsor 200 teachers and will host two sessions at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. The dates for next summer's program are June 18-25 or June 22-29, 2007.

OTTAWA

CTF has new executive, reestablishes Status of Women committee

On the last day of the 86th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) in Ottawa this past July, delegates elected a new executive committee and paved the path of the federation's work for the coming year.

Emily Noble, president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario was elected president designate. She will take office in July 2007, succeeding current president Winston Carter.

Delegates adopted a resolution that urges the Canadian government to recognize domestic and sexual abuse as being destructive to children, families and society, to improve support for victims subject to domestic and sexual abuse, and to increase diligence in prosecuting offenders.

Delegates also adopted a resolution that calls on the Canadian government to establish and fund a universal and accessible national child care plan.

The 99 delegates in attendance further directed CTF to call on the federal government to reaffirm its commitment to Status of Women Canada and to maintain its funding support.

The per teacher fee payment to CTF will rise by 50 cents bringing it to an annual total of $23.30 from $22.80. A supplementary levy of 70 cents per member will ensure that the CTF's Canadian Teachers' Defense Fund is replenished over the next three years.

The CTF AGM is the highest legislative body of the national federation that is held every year to report on activities for the past year and determine priorities and activities for future years. The AGM engages the delegates of Member organizations in debate and discussion on key issues and resolutions that have an impact on public education, students and teachers nationally. The meeting also sets the Federation's priorities, budget and Member's fee, and elects the President and Executive for the organization. CTF is the national voice of over 215,000 teachers across Canada.

Education for Social Justice:
From the Margin to the Mainstream

A Canadian Teachers' Federation Conference
May 4 - 6, 2007 – Ottawa Marriott Hotel

Although definitions of social justice vary widely, equity and fairness are common components. The Canadian Teachers' Federation believes in the concept of social justice in public schools which embodies a focus on equity, democracy, rights, global citizenship, and respect for differences. Our education system and school communities are critical to the creation of a more socially just society.

The conference will provide opportunities to explore the concept of social justice by seeking answers to two important questions:

- What does it mean to be a social justice school or classroom?
- What are the roles and structures of a social justice teacher organization?

This conference will challenge students, educators, parents, communities, researchers, policymakers and unions to remake our schools and organizations in the image of social justice and as sites for social action. Presentations and workshops will focus on:

- Learning about Social Justice
- Living Social Justice
- Advocating for Social Justice
- Working Together for Social Justice

Registration Fee: $428
Early Bird: $321 (before December 21, 2006)

Please visit the CTF Web site for registration information and program updates at www.ctf-fce.ca

Canadian Teachers' Federation
2490 Don Reid Dr. Ottawa ON K1H 1E1 613-232-1505/1-866-283-1505

Vina B. Meadus

VINA B. MEADUS, 1917 – 2005

Childhood memories of school starting and our mom returning to the classroom with us are replaced this year with sad memories of the loss of our dear mother on November 29, 2005.

Mom was born in Grates Cove and did her early schooling in Grates Cove, Prince of Wales Collegiate and Memorial College in St. John's. She taught in many communities including Clarenville (first Anglican teacher), Long Beach, Salt Harbour, Kelligrews, and Grates Cove before marrying our dad, Llewellyn Meadus. Mom then settled in Grates Cove and briefly operated the Post Office there. She returned to teaching and raising her family while doing university correspondence courses. She attended MUN during her summer vacation. Mom taught at the Anglican, United and Amalgamated Schools in Grates Cove. Early in her 28-year career she taught all subjects for K-11 in a one-room school but still found time to organize a yearly school Christmas concert and take her students on a spring picnic out of the community. She later "graduated" to principal of a two-room school, teaching grades 7-11. She retired from Tricon Elementary in Bay de Verde where she must have felt as if she had arrived in Heaven early as she taught only Grade 4.

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give". Mom gave as a foster mom for several children and although she had four children, she did adopt two more. Even with her heavy workload and busy school schedule, she was church organist, Sunday School superintendent, a devoted member of the Anglican Church Women, SUF Ladies Auxiliary, and also the NTA.

We would like to share a few of the tributes to Mom that we received:

Mrs. Meadus was a very fine teacher. One of my proudest moments, and I believe one of hers as well, was in the early sixties when I wrote Grade XI CHE exams. The exam results would arrive in the mail around the middle of August. I recall we were having dinner when Mrs. Meadus came to my home to personally tell me I had passed Grade XI. She was obviously very happy! It was an event that I will never forget. I remember her with glasses in one hand, wiping tears of joy with her other hand. Her memory will remain with us for a long time. (Norm Martin – former student, retired Social Worker)

Vina's understanding of students and her intellectual knowledge was well known. Her reading and explanation of Shakespeare to the Grade XI students kept all other grades spellbound. There was not a problem in Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, or Trigonometry that she could not solve. A former student, who became a teacher, would often send Vina math problems that he could not solve. She would return the solved problems to him. She was always there to help her graduates when they needed her. Where others were concerned, nothing was an effort for her. (Tom Lambert – former student and colleague, retired teacher)

Your mom was very special but it is often difficult to put such things in writing. I enjoyed and treasured my friendship with Vina since we met back in 1970 where we were teachers in a little two room school in Grates Cove. We became friends and she and her family came to hold a very special place in my life. It has been said that 'Friends are those rare people who ask how you are and then wait to hear the answer.' Vina was such a friend and I consider myself truly fortunate to have crossed her path. (Marilyn Woodfine – former colleague, retired teacher)

Vina was an inspirational, sincere and understanding lady. She was the best Math teacher ever, and without her skills and expertise, many of us would never have been successful. She was, indeed, my mentor. (Joyce Noseworthy – former student and retired teacher)

While we mourn our loss, we also celebrate her life and enduring spirit that lives on in us and in the many lives she touched as a teacher. Some people choose teaching as a profession. Mom taught because that's who she was and she will be remembered for the dedication, love and skill she brought to that profession.

Vina is predeceased by husband, Llewellyn, daughter Josephine, granddaughter Wanda, and daughter-in-law Phyllis.

(Submitted by Rex, Bev (Martin), Patsy (Noonan), Roland, Zelda (Harris)

ROBERT TOLSON MEADUS, 1944 – 2006

Tolson, as everyone called him, passed peacefully away at the Carbonear Hospital on June 17, 2006. Though his death was a shock to all of us who knew him, we knew that his battle with cancer gradually wore him down. Not one to complain, he continued to do things that he loved until his final few months of life.

He started his career at the age of 17 when he went to teach at Little Harbour. He also taught at King's Cove, Winterton, and Bay de Verde. He again returned to Winterton before coming to Victoria to teach at Persalvic Elementary School where he taught until his retirement in 1994. He attended Memorial University where he received a Bachelor of Education Degree.

Tolson was a great teacher. He loved children and treated each of his students with the utmost respect, taking into account their strengths and weaknesses.

In all the time I knew him I never knew of a complaint from a child or a parent about him. He was a valued member of the staff and was the heart and soul of the staff room. He was always open to new ideas and quickly accepted any new initiatives in the educational setting. He had a tremendous sense of humor and was self-deprecating.

He was always there with a story to lighten the mood and relieve the tension; he knew how to make the staff room an enjoyable place. Usually using himself as the center of his stories, he told some hearty anecdotes. Like the time he went salmon fishing (one of his great pleasures) on the Exploits River. Early one morning, he claimed, he was walking across the bridge with his fly rod on his shoulder. A few feet of his line was dancing in the wind. A little car came by and the fly on the end of the line caught the antenna of the car. We could picture him trying to reel in the car as he raced after it.

Or the time he was late for school one morning. He told us he was almost at school when he noticed a streak of white paint down the leg of his pants. Apparently, while putting out the trash that morning he didn't notice he was discarding paint cans. He had to return home to change. Thus his tardiness. While telling us this at recess time, sitting with one leg crossed over the other, he noticed he had a salmon fly caught up in his sock.

Tolson had a story for us practically every day. Such was Tolson Meadus. He drew on his personality to deal with many social, emotional and academic situations that came his way. As a colleague he was dedicated and passionate about teaching and was well respected by all of the teachers he encountered over the years and was well respected by students and parents alike. He expected the most from his students and was very proud when, at year's end, the majority of his students reached criteria to go on to the next grade. Quite often he gave students individualized instruction after school to help them with a particular problem they had. He was dedicated to the community and his Church and was involved with minor hockey and the local softball leagues.

Tolson was a woodsman, hunter and fisherman. He often visited his favorite fishing river before going to school in the morning. He once told me that he let his car coast when he was passing my house at 4:30 a.m. on his way salmon fishing at Salmon Cove so that he wouldn't wake us up.

After he retired he got himself a snowmobile and a quad. Just before he passed away he built himself a new shed. He told me that if he had to do it over he would have purchased his bike and skidoo ten years before he retired.

Tolson and his wife Florence had a deep love for all of them. family man who took his sons fis was actively involved in their liv they were pursuing post-seconda that his smiles, quips and jokes w of them.

While he will be remembered and family, he will be remember teaching profession as a dedicat that Tolson's idea of heaven was were lots of ponds and barrens s able to hunt and fish. I am confid now untangling his line.

(Submitted by Frank E. Clarke)

In

Submiss

Submissions to In Memor **words** and may contain a ph be submitted within a timely school year (if possible) of th be included on where the dec accomplishments, communi

It is preferred that all sub Browne, Editor of *The Bulleti* by mail, please address to: Ed Labrador Teachers' Associatio A1B 1W1. Submissions may 1-877-711-6582. Please be su business name, mailing addre

Results from the Ad Hoc Committee on Substitute Teachers

by STEFANIE TUFF

During the NLTA's Biennial General Meeting in April 2005, a resolution was presented to the Assembly from Appalachia branch requesting that a survey of substitute teachers be conducted. The resolution stated:

Resolution 11 from BGM 2005: *That NLTA conduct a survey of substitute teacher issues in the province to include issues related to improved services for substitute teachers, such as professional development activities, bargaining strategies, hiring practices, and understanding the needs of substitute teachers.*

The explanatory note for the resolution stated that a comprehensive assessment of substitute teacher issues and needs has to be undertaken in this province.

The following resolution was also presented from the floor of the 2005 BGM:

Resolution Fl.8 from BGM 2005: *That within a period of one year, the Provincial Executive report and supply rationale on its decision to conduct or not conduct the survey of substitute teachers from Resolution 11.*

Both resolutions were discussed in detail and were referred to Provincial Executive for further discussion and debate. At the May 2005 meeting, Executive considered these resolutions and, after considerable discussion and debate, voted to defeat the original Resolution 11. A motion was then put and carried that would establish a process aimed at addressing the issues and concerns raised by the original resolution: *That an Ad Hoc Committee on Substitute Teachers, consisting of substitute teachers, be established to deal with issues relating to substitutes.*

This decision was communicated to teachers in the May 27-28, 2005 issue of *Executive Notes*. Based on the issues identified in the original resolution and the intent of the new motion carried by Executive, the following Terms of Reference for the Committee were developed and approved at the September 2005 Executive meeting:

Terms of Reference

1. To obtain input from substitute teachers throughout the Province in order to determine: a) their professional development needs; b) their contractual employment issues and concerns; c) the scope of services that substitute teachers expect to receive from the NLTA.
2. To review the benefits and services that are provided to substitute teachers across Canada.
3. To make recommendations to the Provincial Executive Council.

In addition to approving the Terms of Reference, Executive also decided that the Ad Hoc Committee would contain representation from all school boards in the province. Provincial Executive member James Dinn was appointed as Chairperson of the Committee and Perry Downey, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA, was appointed as Staff Consultant.

After several unavoidable weather delays, the Committee held its first meeting in March 2006. The Committee reviewed a number of key documents regarding the benefits currently afforded to substitute teachers in this province and across the country, as well as the issues and concerns expressed by substitute teachers during the collective bargaining process. Two surveys of substitute teachers were also circulated widely across the province by various means. In its subsequent meetings, the Committee engaged in very detailed discussion and debate, taking into consideration all the documentation and statistical data compiled, including the survey results. The Committee then formulated 19 recommendations, which were presented to Executive on September 22, 2006. The following motions were carried by Executive:

- That the NLTA Policy for the hiring of substitute teachers be distributed to all school administrators.
- That NLTA pursue its current policy on hiring procedures for substitute teachers during future rounds of negotiations.
- That school administrators and/or regular teachers provide feedback to substitute teachers who are hired to carry out duties in the school.
- That substitute teachers who are hired into a term or replacement contract be encouraged to request that an evaluation be conducted.

- . That School Districts be encouraged to invite substitute teachers to school-based and board-based PD/Inservice sessions.
- That School Districts be encouraged to cover the cost of travel and meals for substitute teachers wishing to attend PD/Inservice sessions.
- That during District-wide close-out sessions, the District be encouraged to provide relevant PD/Inservice sessions related to the needs of substitute teachers. E.g. Winschool, e-class, First Class, etc.
- That substitute teachers be provided full access to School Board and school website information. E.g. passwords be made available (if applicable); e-mail accounts, etc.
- That *all* schools be encouraged to develop a regular teacher kit that would be provided to a substitute teacher. The kit would include: class lists; daily school schedule; teacher's schedule, including supervision; list of students with special and/or medical needs; school discipline policy and procedure; fire drill plan and procedure; student assistant name (if applicable); substitute teacher registration form; photocopy access; and any other relevant information that a substitute teacher needs to know.
- That a President's Communique be forwarded to all school administrators outlining the concerns and issues raised by substitute teachers during this process:
  - Hiring practices;
  - Duties: additional supervision, loss of preparation;
  - Professional feedback;
  - Regular Teacher Kits; and
  - Professional Voice.
- That School Reps be asked to ensure that information relating to substitute teachers be posted on the NLTA Bulletin Board in their school.

The NLTA is currently in the process of taking the necessary steps to action the above noted recommendations. If you have any questions regarding the results from the Ad Hoc Committee on Substitute Teachers, please contact Perry Downey in the NLTA Benefits and Economic Services Division at 726-3223 or 1-800-569-3599, extension 226.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Recent Arbitration Decisions

Consideration for Replacement and Substitute Teachers

by STEFANIE TUFF

Questions often arise surrounding whether or not preference in hiring must be given to replacement and substitute teachers over applicants who have no prior experience with the school board. These issues are addressed in Article 6 of the Provincial Collective Agreement. Specifically, the Article provides as follows:

6.03 The basic criteria for the selection of teachers shall be competence, suitability and qualifications as assessed by the School Board.

6.12 In filling vacant positions in accordance with Clause 6.03, the Board shall:

a. make a reasonable effort to accommodate requests from teachers already employed with the board in a continuing contract.

b. subject to Clause 6.12(a), give consideration to applications from teachers who have served in replacement and/or substitute positions with the Board before applications from teachers with no previous experience with the Board.

(Emphasis added. For the Labrador West Collective Agreement, see Clauses 42.05 and 42.07.)

School boards have the right to establish, in good faith, the required currently modern standards in qualifications, competence and suitability for teaching positions and to evaluate and assess applicants on the basis of those standards. After making a reasonable effort to accommodate requests, such as transfers, from teachers employed in continuing contracts, school boards are then obligated to consider their term contract and substitute teachers before moving on to consider applications from teachers who are new to the board. This language in the Collective Agreement creates three distinct groups of applicants for vacant positions: 1. teachers who have continuing (permanent) contracts; 2. teachers who have worked in term contracts or as substitutes; and, 3. teachers who have never been employed by the board before. While this contract language does establish some priorities and a sequence for considering applications, it is important to note that school boards are not contractually required to hire on the basis of seniority when filling vacancies (as opposed to the redundancy/reassignment process in which seniority must be followed).

In a past arbitration decision, the Arbitrator determined that the following process would constitute full compliance with the requirements of Clause 6.12(b): *"1) for the individual [hiring] Panel members to develop a short list exclusively from the applications of replacement and substitute teachers, 2) for the whole Panel to review and assess only replacement and substitute teacher applications, 3) for the Panel to conduct any interviews determined necessary only among that group of replacement or substitute teachers and 4) for the Panel to determine how many acceptable applicants there are among that group. ... Only upon completion of that exercise undertaken exclusively for replacement and/or substitute teachers with the Board would the Panel be entitled to undertake a similar exercise for outside applicants. Ultimately the only point at which both sets of applications would be considered together would be in the Board's final determination of the best candidate for the position."* This case involved a grievance filed by a teacher contending violation of Clauses 6.03 and 6.12(b) of the Collective Agreement. The teacher had served in replacement and substitute positions with the board and in May 2002, applied for a permanent 75% position. The teacher was not granted an interview and the job was ultimately awarded to a teacher with no previous experience with the school board. The evidence established that all members of the school board's hiring panel had access to all applications for the position and that at least one panel member reviewed and considered applications from internal and external applicants at the same time and used this information in the formation of his short list. The Arbitrator held that Clause 6.12(b) was breached by the school board because at least one member of the hiring panel had considered replacement and substitute teachers together with outside applicants, thereby tainting the entire process. However, while the arbitration decision did uphold the teacher's grievance by finding that the

Collective Agreement had been violated, in the end it was determined that the teacher did not meet the currently modern standards which were legitimately required for the position in dispute, and that this finding fully addressed the violation of the contract.

This interpretation of Clause 6.12(b) does not require school boards to give preference in hiring to replacement and/or substitute teachers. But, applicants from this group must be given full and fair consideration for vacant teaching positions before any information about applicants who are new to the board can enter into the deliberations. A school board's process for choosing the best candidate for any given teaching position must meet this requirement and be based upon a good faith assessment of competence, suitability and qualifications.

A more recent arbitration decision has again dealt with the same issue. In this case, the grievor was a replacement/substitute teacher who was interviewed for a term contract position. In terms of qualifications, the grievor did meet the currently modern standards for the job, but the school board hired a teacher who had never worked for the board. The successful applicant was interviewed before the grievor and the arbitrator ruled that this constituted an "unequivocal violation of Article 6.12(b)." However, while the arbitrator did determine that the interview process was tainted, performance concerns were raised by two of the grievor's prior administrators, both of whom were contacted for references. The arbitrator ultimately decided that these concerns were significant and that, despite the flaws in the hiring process, the board did have a reasonable basis for deciding to hire the other candidate.

This decision does reinforce the prior ruling that applicants from the replacement/substitute teacher group must be given full and fair consideration for vacant positions before any information about applicants who are new to the board can enter into the deliberations. A school board's process for choosing the best candidate for any given teaching position must meet this requirement and be based upon a good faith assessment of competence, suitability and qualifications. However, the judgment of which applicant best meets the criteria is "as assessed by the School Board" pursuant to Clause 6.03. Therefore, legitimate training and performance concerns can be determinative in a hiring decision.

Should any teacher feel that their rights under the Collective Agreement have been violated in this or any other respect, please contact an Administrative Officer of the NLTA Benefits and Economic Services Division for assistance and advice.

The Use of Sick Leave After Childbirth

by STEFANIE TUFF

Teachers who meet the legislated eligibility requirements can access Employment Insurance maternity and/or parental benefits after the birth or adoption of a new baby. However, natural mothers also have the right to access their paid sick leave benefits for a reasonable recovery period following childbirth.

Pursuant to Article 17 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 28 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) teachers are entitled to a period of up to 39 weeks of unpaid maternity/adoption/parental leave. Birth mothers can commence maternity leave as of the date of the baby's birth, then claim Employment Insurance (EI) maternity benefits for the first 15 weeks of leave and EI parental benefits for the rest of the period of leave (EI parental benefits may be used by either parent or split between them, up to a combined maximum of 35 weeks of benefits). The distinction between EI maternity and parental benefits is that the 15 weeks of maternity benefits are only available to natural mothers as they are intended to provide a specific period of time to allow for physical recovery from pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnant women who are unable to work due to illness, whether the illness is pregnancy related or not, may access their paid sick leave prior to commencing maternity leave or EI sickness benefits.

However, judicial and arbitration decisions in other Canadian jurisdictions have established that birth mothers are entitled to access any regular paid sick leave benefits available to them through their employment for a certain period of time following delivery. In Brooks v. Canada Safeway (1989), 59 D.L.R. (4th) 321, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that pregnancy and childbirth provide "a perfectly legitimate health-related reason for not working and as such should be compensated" by the employer's short term disability or paid sick leave plan. In a subsequent case involving the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Association, the Ontario Court of Appeal followed this reasoning and held that the provisions of a collective agreement prohibiting access to sick leave benefits for a period of time surrounding childbirth were discriminatory. The arbitrator in another case involving an Ontario school board went so far as to rule that birth mothers should be entitled to an automatic six-week period of paid sick leave following delivery without the necessity of medical proof of illness.

In light of these decisions, the NLTA has taken the position that any teacher who gives birth is entitled to access paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period following the delivery of her baby, providing she has the necessary sick leave available and meets all other requirements of the Collective Agreement. This position was first communicated to teachers in the January/February 2003 edition of *The Bulletin*. Despite an initial negative reaction from some school districts, the experience has been mainly positive. Responses from school boards to these requests have been fairly consistent: teachers are being advised that, if they have the necessary medical documentation, paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period following delivery will be approved. Teachers who wish to avail of this option should, when requesting maternity leave, inform their school boards that they plan to access paid sick leave for a reasonable recovery period following the birth and that a medical note for this period will be provided.

Of course, it is up to each individual teacher to decide if she wants to take advantage of this option. From a financial perspective, a period of sick leave with full pay and benefits is more attractive than EI benefits. However, teachers who are at an early stage in their careers or who otherwise do not have a lot of sick leave available may feel it is more important to save their sick days in case of future illness. If you have any questions regarding this issue or require assistance in relation to a maternity/sick leave request, please contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Dr. Otto Tucker Named to Order of Canada

Dr. Otto Tucker

It is considered by many to be Canada's highest honour and now a graduate, former faculty member and honorary degree recipient of Memorial University can add Order of Canada to his list of achievements.

Dr. Otto Tucker, a well-known educator in Newfoundland and Labrador, was appointed by Governor General Michaëlle Jean on July 24 and will be invited to accept his insignia at a ceremony to be held at a later date.

Dr. Tucker began his teaching career in 1942 in the communities of La Scie, Trout River and Change Islands. For the 1948-49 school year he was principal of Salvation Army School in Botwood, and from 1949-51, Salvation Army School in Gambo. While in Gambo he co-founded the Gambo-Gander Branch of the NTA and was elected its first President.

While attending Memorial University, Dr. Tucker co-founded the NTA Branch on campus. In 1958 he graduated from Memorial with a B.A.(Ed.) and received a medal for student leadership. He served as principal of Salvation Army School in Windsor and was President of the NTA Exploits Valley Branch. From 1958-59 he was vice-principal at Botwood Salvation Army Central High School.

In 1960-61 he taught history at Booth Memorial while writing his thesis for a partial requirement for a M.Ed. at the University of Alberta. The thesis was titled *Origin and Development of Regional and Central High Schools in Newfoundland.*

From 1961 to 1964 Dr. Tucker was school principal in the Mackenzie Delta region of the North West Territories in the communities of Aklavik and Fort McPherson. He then attended the University of Toronto and graduated in 1967 with a Ed.D. While at the University of Toronto he organized the first Graduate Students Association in Education and was elected as the President of the Association.

Dr. Tucker was a professor of Education at Acadia University in Nova Scotia until 1971 when he moved to Memorial University, also in the position of professor of Education with Memorial's Faculty of Education. It was from Memorial that he retired in 1988. He was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree (L.L.D.) from Memorial in 1997. In 1999 he was made an Honorary Member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

Besides his extensive educational and professional history, Dr. Tucker has also been very active at the community level. He is founder and president of the Wessex Society, an organization that explores and strengthens Newfoundland's link to the West County of England. He was recipient of the English Silver Cross of St. George, and the Canadian Centennial Medal, for his work with the Wessex Society. Dr. Tucker was also recipient of the Heritage Award of the Newfoundland Historical Society for his work in heritage affairs. He volunteered with the Newfoundland Cancer Society and was co-founder of the Inter-Church Fund for Hungry Children. He was a member of the Provincial Steering Committee for prostate cancer support group, and was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for his work with the Newfoundland and Labrador Prostate Cancer Society. In 2004, he was among the first members to be appointed to the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dr. Tucker is also known for his humorous commentaries on the Newfoundland and Labrador experience. He is a prolific author and has entertained audiences on camera and off on the lives and culture of the province.

Be Active, if Only for the Health of It!

by KATHY TAYLOR-ROGERS

So you want to be *active* because you know it will improve your health but you are going to start next week. Somehow next week becomes the week after and then next month. For some unknown reason everything else in life takes a priority over our personal health and well being. We see information all around us about the importance of physical activity and yet most of us have a lot of difficulty with starting or sticking to a plan to be more active. Some researchers report that physical inactivity is recognized as being second only to tobacco use as a key risk factor for ill health.

Let's explore the benefits of physical activity. Research has clearly demonstrated that regular physical activity can:

- greatly reduce the risk of Heart Disease and Stroke;
- decrease the risk of Peripheral Vascular Disease;
- decrease the risk of diabetes;
- reduce high blood pressure levels;
- assist in combating obesity;
- increase muscle strength and assist in prevention of back pain;
- lower the risk of osteoporosis;
- improve your lipid profile;
- half the risk of colon cancer; and
- improve your mood and reduce stress levels.

Some researchers even report that studies have shown a significant relationship between physical activity and improved cognitive functioning in older adults and decreased occurrence of dementia. One research study showed that those who exercised for at least 20-30 minutes, three times per week, were less likely to develop Alzheimer Disease.

Are you willing to keep putting the pursuit of a more active lifestyle off, when your very life may be at stake? I have never understood why people tend to think that "bad things" happen to "other" people but will not happen to them. Yet all around us we read and hear about 30, 40, 50 and 60 year olds who are facing quite serious health problems. Some are overcoming them by changing their lifestyles after their diagnosis, but many others are not so lucky and do not get a warning call.

My advice is to stop procrastinating and make the decision to be more active now and stick to it. It does not have to mean spending a lot of money to join a gym that you have to get in the car and drive to. Much of the research has shown that 30 minutes per day of moderate intensity activity for five or more days per week can translate into significant health benefits. Each person needs to examine their own personal lifestyle habits and taking into consideration their own personality, decide on what will work best for them. When deciding on a plan some honest, personal reflection will be necessary. Registered dietician, Francine White, reports that two patterns emerge for unsuccessful physical activity plans. Unconscious resistance applies to someone who sets goals, starts a program and then sabotages it and quits. Active refusal applies to someone who experiences anxiety or resentment when exercise is recommended. For some people exercise may have become a punishment for excess weight or overeating so exercise brings about bad memories. For others just talking about the health benefits is enough to turn it from fun to "work" and who wants to do "work". Honest, personal reflection should provide you with the answers as to what has been stopping you from pursuing your goal for a more physically active life so that you can re-think your approach to physical activity.

The next step will be to figure out what will work best for you. There are endless options for how you can go about increasing your physical activity levels. You may join a dance class, take a brisk walk, wash the car by hand, join the gym, play catch or frisbee with the kids, do some gardening, join an aerobic class, buy an exercise or aerobic video and work out at home, bicycle, use the stairs, plan family swim nights, and the list goes on. The important task will be to examine your life and current routine and choose something that you can realistically fit in to your routine. It should also be something that you

will enjoy. In the beginning you may have to push yourself a little, but as this activity becomes more and more integrated into your lifestyle it will become easier and you will begin to look forward to it.

Once you make the decision to become more active it may be most helpful to define this goal and actually keep a journal of your progress. This may assist you in keeping on task and focused. It will also be a record of exactly what activities you are doing to keep active and how often you are doing them and the amount of time being spent on each activity. This will be a clear indicator of whether or not you are meeting your goal. Keep in mind that if a conscious effort towards developing and maintaining an active lifestyle is something new for you it will take awhile for you to incorporate this as a part of your everyday activities. It will probably take two months of this new routine for it to become an integrated part of your daily life. The good news is that once you make the conscious effort to embrace this new part of your lifestyle you will not have to think about it or work so hard at it. It will just become an automatic part of your everyday routine.

One thing to be aware of is that it is common to stray from your goal or plan. Life can get hectic and other commitments can get in the way now and then, but do not lose faith if this occurs. Sometimes people have a tendency to give up just because they run into a week where they are unable to keep their plans to be active. Do not despair; this is normal – just don't let it become your excuse for giving up – as this is the real trap. Just because your plan goes off track for a while is no reason to give up. Just get back on track at your first opportunity and rework your plan if you have too. The most important thing is to do what you can to keep on track as this is just as important, if not more important, than any of your other commitments – as you are doing this for you and you deserve to be good to yourself for a change!

Now that we've reviewed the benefits and explored possible options for how you can become more active, it is up to you to just do it. There is no time like the present and the benefits are well worth it.

Kathy Taylor-Rogers is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Kathy Taylor-Rogers (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

Project Overseas 2006

Dispatches: From the Warm Heart of Africa

by FRED WOOD

So you want to change the world? You want to make a difference? For over thirty years now I had been telling my students that they must give back, that they owe their community. They must serve and volunteer to help make it a better place. Growing up in Bay Roberts I was inspired by a father (the town's first Fire Chief in 1947), and mother (President of the Home and School) who were continually involved in community. As a Global Issues and World History teacher I pressed my students to become involved. I asked them to think globally. I had them work on Oxfam projects, human rights workshops, participate in Model United Nations Conferences. After all, it is their duty, especially as they live on such a privileged part of our planet.

Well, thanks to the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) program called Project Overseas, in the summer of 2006, I had my opportunity to work at the grassroots level in Central Africa. The place: the small city of Zomba nestled beneath an impressive plateau on the plains of Southern Malawi. The mission: to teach geography to teachers of Malawi as they prepare to write government examinations in order to increase their competence and remuneration. The result: an opportunity of a lifetime to make discoveries in a far distant land …and to discover a few things about myself as well. What follows are excerpts from my journal, written in the quiet reflective dawn of an African sunrise, or late-evening sounds of the African night.

Ottawa, July 6

Have just completed Project Orientation with fifty other volunteer teachers who are to fan out around the world. We're told we are 'ambassadors for Canada'. Fellow Newfoundlander Winston Carter, President of CTF, reminds us that for over forty years Project Overseas has sent hundreds of teachers each summer on international development projects. We participated in team building exercises. Sessions included travel, health care, and how to be an interculturally effective person. I learn that Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, where one in five adults has contracted HIV/AIDS! The rains have failed recently. It has 48,000 teachers. Student-teacher ratios of 160 to 1 are permitted! Languages used are English and Chichewe. Malawians like fish! People are reported to be warm and friendly and the nation is affectionately referred to as 'the warm heart of Africa'. Oh my, am I up to the task?

Lilongwe, Malawi, July 25

Mueli bwanji? How are you? Adapting to the heat and dust; it has not rained in months. The rains return in December. A few relaxing moments after twenty-five hours in airplanes. Saw Mount Kilimanjaro from the air. We are south of the equator. Oh boy, where have I gotten myself? Our four-member team is preparing for our assignments to the north and south of the country. New food to become accustomed to, be mindful of the water, prepare our subjects to teach, construct workshops on gender equity, HIV/AIDS and leadership. Meet with the under-funded, hardworking, resource-strapped, completely inspiring officials of the Teachers Union of Malawi (TUM) who are conducting these three-week in-services for their members. We will work with local co-tutors at the classroom level.

Zomba, Malawi, July 26

Travelled five hours south to Zomba. Dry landscape. First class highway, crowded marketplaces, people everywhere, buses, trucks, bikes, goats, chickens, clusters of mud huts in rural villages. Children wave. On arrival we find to our delight an Internet café costing a mere five kwachas (124 kwacha to one Canadian dollar) a minute. Unbelievable. Connection with family and colleagues as if I were around the corner. Otherwise, very much a world away. I write my journal entry today with the Call to

Prayer sounding from the local mosque just down the road from our lodgings. Malawi is twenty percent Muslim. It leaves me reflecting.

Mulunguzi Secondary School, July 28
The school's motto is, "No Sweet Without Sweat!". Good idea I prepared lesson plans for several hours the night previous. I teach geography and several workshop sessions. These teachers are keen. It is basic teaching. Facts, figures. New methodology but only if it can work in their resource-short classrooms. Teachers face pupil-teacher ratios of 100 to 1, few textbooks, no student materials, poverty, and complex health issues. Education is free only to Grade 8. Some teachers conduct their classes under a tree! Their enthusiasm and desire for knowledge is relentless. Their perseverance and warmth amazing. Their customs … a young female teacher arrives in class carrying a heavy desk … on her head! I love this place.

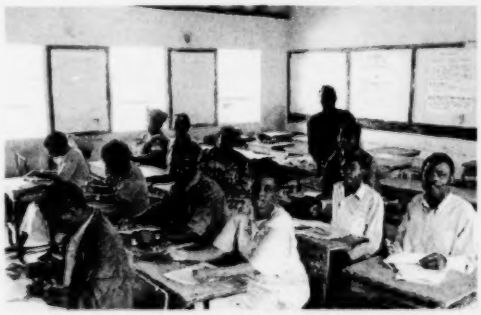
Tutors Gerard Banda, Fred Wood and William Chapasuka.

Staffroom, August 3
Teachers are teachers are teachers. Teacher participants and our Malawian co-tutors could be found in any of the staffrooms I have frequented over the years. Same characters: jokers, quiet ones, passionate debaters, and the opinionated! Canadians and Malawians share food, music (Bob Marley is an African hero) and stories with colleagues. The same shenanigans and debates arose over students, the state of education, the lack of resources, the local political situation (a budding and still fragile democracy), and the role of teachers in society. Our African colleagues speak in more fundamental terms of safety and health, basic human rights, and of impossible challenges.

Liwonde National Park, August 5
Wild Malawi – thirty kilometres into the back country. Elephants and hippopotamus, colourful birds and elegant antelope. Lizards and strangely different bugs. The bush country is very dry away from the rivers, and dominated by huge baobab trees. Lake Malawi is a stunning vista, reminiscent of the Caribbean. Bargained with souvenir sellers at their stands in the local marketplace. Food stalls sold potatoes, carrot and cabbage – felt at home, sort of! This is the Africa I had read of as a child.

Classroom, August 10
Africa of today is still a place of wonder. Today's class of 43 teachers prepare for exams in geography. Having only completed a high school education, this professional development means three weeks away from home. All treasure their notebooks and materials. Any handout – pins, rulers, and pencils – draws a crowd. Using Newfoundland postcards and NLTA pins as prizes for correct answers.

Had one postcard remaining – of the lighthouse at Cape Bonavista. Asked if anyone knew the meaning of OPEC, from our unit on oil production. An older man in front raised his hand slowly and hesitantly. He stood with great difficulty and announced that he believed he knew the answer. He straightened himself and proceeded to say, 'the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries'. Slow and deliberate, he had the whole class rooting for him; so much so, I thought they would applaud him when he finished. I said, 'correct' and he sat down with an embarrassed nod of his head and a great beaming smile. He accepted his prize graciously. Wow! Older than me, trying to make it on an impossibly low-wage, against daunting challenges; yet such dignity. I will likely continue complaining should I see perceived injustices around me, but after seeing things here, and how Africans conduct themselves with courage and dignity, it gives perspective.



Professional Development for the teachers of Malawi.

Namilongo Elementary School, August 12
We went out into the bushland to the south of Zomba to a town called Namilongo. Land was dry and dusty; the road was rutted. The red soil packed hard after months of the dry season. The visit was to the community centre for about one hundred orphans who have lost their parents to HIV/AIDS, TB, and other

disease. Some suffer these diseases themselves. They have few personal possessions. They are being cared for by community elders, and attend the local school during daytime. One student has recently completed high school, to the immense pride of the whole group. The centre had been tipped off that we were arriving. The grandmothers had dressed up, all the local people came by, and the kids surrounded the car. No mob scene, just a lot of smiling faces singing songs of welcome. We all crowded into the tiny cement-floored building with dozens more at the door and open windows. We were overwhelmed.

In Africa, such occasions are very formal. The director welcomed us, introduced the child-care workers and offered a prayer. The language of the countryside is the native Chichewe, but we received an English translation. They then sang and danced songs written especially for us that morning. The choreography was stunning. Older students performed several plays about the hard reality of life in their part of Africa … brutal topics of child abuse, witch doctors and the spread of HIV/AIDS. It spoke of the fabric of society here, especially in the rural areas where most of Malawi's 14 million people live. All the children watched in fascination. We occupied a place of honour at the front. They got a great kick out of the fact that Kathryn was our team leader; that point being noted especially for the young girls.

We then spoke with them outside under a tree with goats and chickens and dozens of curious eyes around. Most wanted to be nurses or teachers or football players. They all know the value of working hard and respecting their teachers. They dream of a better life. The scene felt like observing some BBC World News documentary. We did not feel worthy of the attention and know our gesture of help was wholly inadequate, but greatly welcomed by the local teacher who had arranged our visit. Some will now have books, pens and paper. More singing, dancing, speeches, and prayer and shaking hands with a line that stretched down the road. We travelled in silence for some time as we drove away.

Students of Namilongo Elementary School watching plays.

Zomba-Lilongwe Highway, August 18
Final goodbyes to the staff at our lodgings and our wonderful hosts, the Teachers Union of Malawi. Now for the final five hours north through the dry, hot plains. Bright sunshine as always. I see the farmers are starting to clear their fields and burn off last year's straw, in preparation for the growing season. Hope the rains come this year. Have three weeks come and gone? I will miss enjoying sima and chambo, the beautiful sunrises, the sounds of the night, and the warm way people greet each other here. Zikomo, Malawi!

Pearson International, Toronto, August 20
It is 8 p.m. on Sunday evening; I am savouring a large double-double from Tim's and stretching my legs. Planes aren't designed for tall skinny guys, especially when the flights are nine-hour over-nights, and then six-hour wait-overs in airport lounges from Nairobi, to Amsterdam to Toronto. Only three hours from home! I still have African dust on my boots, clothes and hat. In my heart and soul are African experiences that profoundly touched me. Warm smiles. Eager questions. Cultural awakenings. Hard lessons of reality. Passionate discussion of what is needed for the children and future of Africa. Teachers fighting feelings of resignation in the face of such incredible challenges. A realization that I will never change the world, but feeling that for a little while I was able to help.

Ah … AC 626 to St. John's, Gate 137 …
There are many ways to experience life. Have a successful career. Raise children. Travel. See the world. Serve your community. Let me add one more possibility to that list. Take a few weeks of your life and immerse yourself in a truly worthy and challenging experience. If you happen to be a teacher, pssst… have I got just such an experience for you!

I want to thank CTF and the NLTA for giving me this opportunity of a lifetime. Special mention of the work, encouragement and support of Beverley Park at the NLTA. Thank you for the opportunity to 'test my mettle' and 'do my bit'. I hope I was not found wanting. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to find out more about myself, and our fellow human beings in this very small world. For helping me discover that while our circumstances are so very different, dreams everywhere are the same.

Fred Wood is Social Studies Department Head at Queen Elizabeth Regional High School in Foxtrap.

Sharing the Journey

A Tribute to a Wonderful Traveling Companion

by BEVERLEY PARK

Anyone who knows the work of NLTA's Professional Development Division understands that it frequently takes those of us who work here "on the road". In doing my job, whether it be facilitating a PD session at a school or at a district sponsored event, holding a focus group or consultation, or providing support to Executive at a committee meeting, I have traveled the entirety of this province. On planes, snowmobiles, ferries, and of course, in my car, I have gone to places I never knew existed!

On occasion, both PD officers are working in the same town at the same time, and over the past nine years I have had the experience of traveling a fair bit with René Wicks. We've driven together through snowstorms from Marystown. We've done workshops in "yesterday's clothes" and winter boots – at the airport in St. John's we had to make the choice between taking our suitcase or taking the two boxes of workshop materials. (If you were one of the 150 or so teachers in the gymnasium in Plum Point that winter's day, you might recall that!). We've gotten wake up calls at 4:00 a.m. to catch 6:00 a.m. flights. We've spent way too many sweltering summer nights in university residence rooms at DSS or CONTACT. All this to say that it's in those somewhat unusual circumstances that one really gets to see the mettle of a man. The things I could tell you about René Wicks!

I could tell you that he is a connoisseur of all that is culinary, but can also appreciate a slice of baloney. He is a talented musician of many genres, but he'll sing "My Ding-aling" at Karaoke. He insists on quality and shops around, but we have bought brains on e-bay (no! not real brains – models for our workshops!). In many ways, René is a man of contradictions, a bit of a chameleon really… and I mean that in the best possible way. I have seen him stand firm and I have seen him back off. I have seen him wear his confidence like a garment, but I have also seen him at times when he's not so sure of himself! He has enough humility to know that he can be wrong, and enough intelligence to make it right. He is a strong man with a very gentle soul. He dislikes discord but is not afraid to challenge an opinion.

Over the years René and I have developed and delivered countless workshops on team building; we've built models based on sharing and cooperation, and preached to whoever would listen to us about collaboration. But we have done something much more significant than that – we have lived these lessons in the way we have worked together. We have modeled the true meaning of collaboration and teamwork through the very special professional relationship and personal friendship we have shared on the many roads we have traveled.

There's an old Irish proverb which says, "Two shorten the road." While I was always glad to be home, the road always seemed shorter with René as my traveling companion. There was never a time when we lacked for conversation – and yet we could sit comfortably silent together. Someone once joked that I must have a lot of miles on me! As I have reflected on this article it occurs to me that not all of my journeys in PD can be measured in miles. The most significant may be best measured in memories.

This article is written as a tribute to a colleague and a friend, my fellow traveler for many years, René Wicks, who retired from the NLTA at the end of September. We have had so, so many experiences which, as we try to re-count them, we realize "you just had to be there!". I am so thankful that I was!

Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Vancouver's World Peace Forum

Working Together to End War and Build a Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World

by GARY NOEL & KEITH SAMUELSON

Over 50% of the world's population lives in cities. With this figure increasing annually, cities are no longer oases but are seriously affected by the winds of national policies of militarization and war.

– Alfred L. Marder, President of the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities

During a summer of much debate about Canada's military role in Afghanistan and much controversy about homegrown terrorists being bred in Toronto, many citizens struggled to understand the underlying causes of conflict and the dynamics of positive change. For the first time in history, citizens representing every region of the world came together for a six-day program focusing on strategies for creating a global culture of peace. Five thousand international delegates, presenters and performers from over ninety countries met in Vancouver from June 23 to 28 at the World Peace Forum to discuss "Cities and Communities: Working together to end war and build a peaceful, just and sustainable world".

The conference was organized by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation with the support of the city of Vancouver and the Simons Foundation. Participants included youth, mayors, councilors and parliamentarians, environmentalists, interfaith groups, teachers, academics, peace educators, trade unionists, health professionals, First Nations leaders, war veterans and resisters, refugees and internally displaced peoples, business leaders, peace activists and officials from non-governmental organizations. North, South and Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Eurasia, the Middle East and Europe were all represented. The International Peace Messenger Cities and Mayors for Peace sent Mayors from around the world. As Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan pointed out at a Forum dialogue and dinner, with military spending diverting funds from health, housing and transportation, peace is definitely "city business".

Keith Samuelson (left) and Gary Noel with BCTF conference organizer Jane Turner.

The stunning University of British Columbia campus was the main site for the conference. Other venues from across Vancouver provided a spectacular setting for a wide variety of fascinating events. The program was designed around three pillars: living space, social justice and sustainability. Plenary sessions, thematic workshops, roundtable discussions and cultural shows were offered and working groups assisted in the planning of activities within a wide range of themes from international perspectives. Major topics included global justice, women and peace, First Nations issues, racism and discrimination, sustainability, disarmament and peace education. Highlights included opening ceremonies at the Orpheum, a Peace Walk from Seaforth Peace Flame Park to Sunset Beach and the Peace Festival, the arrival of the Peace Boat from Kobe, Japan on its fifty-third voyage around the world, and performances by Buffy Ste. Marie, K'Naan, Pied Pumkin, the Be Good Tanyas, Holly Near and many other musicians, dancers, actors and artists. Featured speakers included former UN Weapons

Inspector Hans Blick, renowned Chinese scholar Su Zhiliang, British Columbia Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo, American anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan, Olympian Silken Laumann, Bishop Emeritis of Chiapas Don Samuel Ruiz, Congressman Dennis Kucinich, Japanese physicist Hiromichi Umebayashi, children's entertainer Raffi Cavoukian, *Roots of Empathy* author Mary Gordon, human rights activist and Amnesty International prisoner of conscience Suh Sung, Burmese human rights activist Charm Tong, Canadian Senator Doug Roche, author of *The Human Right to Peace*, and Dr. Helen Caldicott, founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility. Focal points included the war in Iraq, racism and the erosion of civil liberties, renewed nuclear threats and global warming. The line-up included regional conferences on Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, as well as hundreds of presentations and discussions on human rights, disarmament, environmentalism and sustainability, health, economics and spirituality. The object was to create plans for immediate campaigns and actions as well as living spaces for the world's peoples to imagine, develop and nurture a world of peace and justice for our lifetime and future generations. Throughout the conference there was a major concern that the "war on terror" is undermining human rights and the role of the United Nations in a world that faces massive poverty, homelessness, rising rates of disease and increasing economic inequality coupled with unprecedented military spending.

Jane Turner and her associates from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation organized a dynamic program of arts and cultural events. The official opening of "Hiroshima and Nagasaki", an extraordinary exhibit of photographs and A-bomb artifacts from 1945, was presented at Storyeum in partnership with the World Peace Forum. Dr. Hans Blick, Chairperson of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, presented a report that contained 60 recommendations to control the proliferation and use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The "September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows" offered a session on "Civilian Casualties to War" and "The Wolf Sessions" presented two days of talks, workshops and performances focusing on issues that directly affect local and global First Nations peoples. Youth Day workshops and performances organized by and for young people included a live Virtual Youth Conference connecting youth all over the world via the Internet, featuring special guest Deepak Chopra, President of Alliance for a New Humanity and author of *Peace is the Way*. The Multicultural Peace Lantern Ceremony in Stanley Park included lantern decorating and music followed by a sunset procession to float candle-lit lanterns on the water, reaching across cultural bour
the universal suffering caused by wa
celebrate a shared commitment to
that the survival of hope, beauty an
is as important as the survival of the

The Forum concluded that a w
is achievable provided we build a j
social justice, human rights and
and that we educate children to
of peace. During the "Internationa
Conference: Schools and Societies
Mary Gordon outlined how we ca
of peace in our schools by introduc
potential of empathy and compass
Dean of Education at the Univers
Cora Weiss, President of the Hagu
and Kathleen Meagher, Educatio
with the Canadian Commission f
keynote panelists for "Creating a
Reflections from a Variety of Pers
them described their roles in educ
how they partner with organizatio
culture of peace.

(co

Grace Feuerverger, a Professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and author of *Oasis of Dreams: Teaching and Learning Peace in a Palestinian Village in Israel*, presented a case study of an experimental school in a small village near Jerusalem called Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam. The community is committed to peaceful coexistence. Each classroom has an equal number of Jewish and Palestinian children who experience an integrated education but are also encouraged to develop their own distinct identities. Each student learns his or her own language, history and culture as well as the language, history and culture of the other group. Every class has two team teachers, one Jewish and one Palestinian. Dr. Feuerverger explained how a school and community can deal with deep divisions in an effort to build a just and sustainable society. She provided an exemplary model of multicultural education that can be applied to other schools and communities and demonstrated how "education has the power to create a collective 'home' – a vision of the future nurtured by the reflective narratives and stories of all the players involved".

This is the vision we shared in our session on "Teaching for International Understanding A Holistic Approach to Creating a Culture of Peace" as we officially launched the Newfoundland and Labrador Global Education Centre (NLGEC), a Global Classroom Initiative sponsored by CIDA in partnership with the Eastern School District of Newfoundland and Labrador (www.pwc.k12.nf.ca/nlgec). Our thesis was that a holistic approach utilizing a "Teaching for International Understanding" framework educates students to become responsible global citizens who feel motivated and empowered to create a culture of peace. We presented a theory of international understanding, provided a framework that identifies the essential principles of this theory, demonstrated methods for making international understanding a central goal of instruction and made recommendations for connecting peace education, human rights, international development and global issues to the local, national and international communities.

However, it was the "reflective narratives and stories of the {students} involved" that made the deepest impact on teachers, university professors and peace activists from a wide variety of countries and diverse backgrounds. The stories, songs, essays, poetry, artwork, interviews, personal responses, theatrical performances, and video productions we shared from the "Learning Activities" section of the NLGEC and other websites students have created over the past six years to commemorate the United Nations International Decade for Peace were received with overwhelming enthusiasm. Our audience was particularly moved by our students' commitment to social justice and community service as evident in numerous innovative projects in which they raised awareness and considerable funds for people in need at home and abroad in partnership with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, CIDA, Oxfam Canada, Amnesty International, the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Association and other local non-governmental organizations and multicultural associations. They were quite impressed with the activities of PWC's Youth Action Committee, our school's implementation of the Asper Foundation's Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program and our involvement with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Our Global Citizenship Certificate Program, which includes in-depth study, a travel component and compulsory community service, is a model which districts in other provinces and countries have expressed an interest in adopting. The power of empathy and compassion is palpable in our students' reflective narratives and stories.

Conference organizers displaying peace quilt at Presenters Reception area.

The Preamble to the UNESCO constitution declares that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed". It was an honor and a privilege to share ideas about constructing the defenses of peace in the minds of young people. We hope to have more opportunities to do so in the future. The World Peace Forum taught us that peace is not just city business, but school business as well.

Gary Noel is a Learning Resources Teacher and Keith Samuelson is an English Teacher at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's.

Playing the Game
Using Games to Stimulate Learning

by SHARON PEACH

As teachers, most of us are aware that some students are not as enamored of school as we might like them to be. In fact, some students downright hate school. In these cases, we have a real challenge to find ways to engage students in their own learning when they'd rather be just about anywhere else.

So why do we have to try so hard, when one possible answer is right there in front of us in the things that kids are talking about when they're supposed to be working on math? There's no doubt that the Nintendo, Playstation, and Yu-Gi-Oh! people have found ways to excite young people. And there are things that we can take from their accomplishments and apply to our classrooms to make learning seem less of a chore and more like something exciting and interesting.

As an example, I've personally used the Jeopardy! format in my classroom for years. I copied it from a colleague many years ago in my first teaching assignment, and have used it successfully ever since. I have kids fighting to play "Alex", and often have arguments in class over what the rules of the game really are. There's a competitive element to it that students really like, but there is also a cooperative element to it when students play on teams and the members of the team have to work together to answer in the form of a question before the other team does.

Jeopardy, though, is just one example of bringing games, and the media, to the classroom. I've also had some success using the "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire" format, but find it a little more focussed on one student than I like, as it leaves too many others to their own devices.

Recently, in completing my final paper for an M.Ed. degree, I came across a book by Shelley Hong Xu with Rachael Sawyer Perkins and Lark O. Zunich entitled *Trading Cards to Comic Strips: Popular Culture Texts and Literacy Learning in Grades K-8*. In this text, Hong Xu et al make reference to ways that teachers can incorporate the trading card phenomenon into their classrooms by having students create their own trading cards of historical figures, musicians, organisms, mathematical functions or properties, or just about anything else that you might choose to have them work on. Similarly, there are online resources that teachers can access to help students create their own comic strips. Students can use these resources to complete assignments or to demonstrate to their teacher their ability to create dialogue. Due to the brief nature of comic strip writing, it may be ideally suited to younger students or to students who have difficulty writing but are quite adept at using computer technology.

I feel that we as teachers have so many skills and teaching techniques at our disposal that sometimes we don't really see how valuable our little games or activities may be. But these tools and skills are very valuable, and passing them along to one another is something simple we can do to make our jobs just a little more enjoyable and rewarding. If something here catches your attention, use it well. If you want to share other tools and techniques, I'm sure your colleagues will be just as happy to borrow from your skills, as I was to borrow from someone else's.

Sharon Peach is Science/Math Teacher at Carbonear Collegiate.

NLTA Teacher Discount Program

The QSP/Reader's Digest magazine discount program is in place again this year, offering NLTA members a 50% discount from the QSP/Reader's Digest magazine catalogue. The special offer for NLTA members is **50% off the cost listed in red. That is 50% off the catalogue price.**

Important Information

- Copies of the catalogue and order form have been sent to your school.
- The catalogue can also be accessed online at www.nlta.nl.ca; the link is on the main page. The online catalogue is for viewing purposes only. **Orders cannot be placed online as you will be charged full price.**
- There is no limit to the amount of subscriptions you can order.
- Completed orders **must be received by November 10th** in order to guarantee delivery of the Christmas gift card.

Please review the ordering information on the correct procedures for completing your order form.

QSP Reader's Digest

Can You Tell Your Story?

by LESLIE L. KENNEDY

The other night a television show revealed the fact that Americans routinely work 60 to 70 hours a week and like it. This set me to thinkin'. While such a grueling work week is no more unique to the modern working poor than it was to past peoples, surely no one likes it? Surely if you could feed and clothe your family providing a relative level of comfort, no right minded (nor blessed!) North American would choose to work more…and prefer it that way?

Reflecting, I do it myself all the time and I do often like it. Most of my friends do too. But we also constantly complain that we are exhausted and wonder if evil society has seduced us into a retarded competition with buddy next door/cubical/province(?!) and the constant quest for more/better/best! Why do we value product over process, materiality over…I don't know…spirituality? Is it really the fault of diabolical corporate marketing? Or…and this is where I get nervous, where I look at how many times even today I put off sitting in front of this screen…is it because we are scared to be left alone inside ourselves?

I have been a brooder my whole life, a moody brooder. I have also been told constantly to "Give it up!", "Get with the program, sister!", "Do something for gawd sakes and get your lazy butt off the couch!". When truly desperate, I'd lumber off down the street for a walk or pick up a book or, later, grab one of my kids and some glue, string, construction paper, macaroni and markers (Yup, I am that kind of parent. Really not much of a kid person, though I do stand by my abilities with the 12 and up crowd). I did feel better.

About seven years ago I got a good job I really liked. I worked like a dog and loved every minute of it. I was so proud too of how smoothly my husband and I managed to work and parent our two small children plus keep the house admirably clean, tidy and consistently stocked with essentials; no one ever had to brush their teeth with an expired tooth brush and there was always a can of shaving cream to dilute the poster paint from industrial sized bottles when the neighbourhood gang descended on Saturdays with a yen to finger paint (and hubby is an electric razor man!) No time to brood. "I don't know how you do it!" marveled my admiring mother.

Then somewhere between the beginning of year three and the end of year four something happened, or more properly put, something that had been happening picked up pace. I didn't feel it, didn't even suspect.

A certain famous doctor calls it 'disease' as in 'dis ease' but I call it depletion. Maybe all my life I was slowly being depleted of something sustaining, something that feeds who I am. Right then, during that year, while I still loved my job, it particularly was consuming nearly my every waking thought and all of my time. I didn't bother much with my family as I knew the work was waiting and would worsen if not dealt with. Guilt gripped but was assuaged by a truly decent husband who, I felt, was much more fun and completely capable and willing. My children did demand my time and I gave it in cuddles, social and emotional deconstructions of broken hearts, hurt feelings and the astounding complexity of life, not to mention rides to soccer games and the odd made-from-scratch mind you batches of chocolate chip cookies. I also fulfilled my role (maintained my roll) cooking, arranging, cleaning (even before I was consciously aware of a problem I knew something had to give. Why not give the toilets?), appointment making, toilet paper stocking, coordinating family transportation and general marriage maintenance. (It was so damn easy to be in love once…)

Things that shouldn't began to lose their appeal. Biweekly get-togethers with the 'Stitch and Bitch' girls (a modern and much cooler version of our mothers' bridge clubs) began to require an effort and coordinating lunches or power walks was not as pleasurable as it was work. I hunkered down in the old recliner under a stack of papers and my blue marking pen (red hurts too much) and watched orange leaves stick to the navy fleece of my son's jacket, fist sized snow balls accumulate on the luxurious chest fur of our new spaniel and spring snails slide for their lives as my daughter and her friends furthered their entomological research. When my mother unexpectedly died at the beginning of year five, I had nothing left.

This is more than some slide into depression following a painful life change. It's also not evidence of the crappy shake women get in this life because I still watch my husband negotiate his way after the death of his father four years ago and around his own personal demons he refuses to admit exist. We have both

been depleted, but unlike his devotion to sports which provides, I believe, a certain kind of regeneration for him, I had nothing. And by the time my mother died I was too far gone anyway. All I had was the inside of my head that apparently had atrophied to the point where deciding between pork and chicken for dinner was too much (Still is, actually) and a heart barely beating. Three years later I can't say I am any more over my mother's loss than I can say I am 'replete'. I do think though that I've had some breakthroughs about how not to go back, how to avoid being depleted to the point where the next painful change can knock me down so hard I don't care to get up, let alone fight back.

I think you need to spend some serious time inside and it's the most uncomfortable place to be. I don't mean inside in the recliner obviously. While my broodiness was probably not very productive, I was at least intimately in touch with how I felt about things and to some extent why. The whys were misguided and manipulated but they were something I could hold on to in a sweaty grasp when challenged. Back at the beginning of that third year I knew a lot of stuff, had accumulated a lot of knowledge but I didn't know what to do with it nor which of it reflected who I was, what I believed, because I had chosen to forge on, haul my lazy butt off the couch, and distract myself from asking some hard questions about what I stood for. If I had, maybe depletion or 'dis ease' wouldn't have found such fertile ground.

But I don't blame myself too much. Spending time inside, looking yourself in the eye is not comfortable. Frankly, it can be excruciating. I had to look at why I couldn't go on without my mother, why I felt so incapable. I felt like sh-- about how weak I was, embarrassed about how long it was taking me to get over it and how much help I seemed to need. My intellect, the very core of my being and identity, was letting me down so what the hell did that mean? I still don't know but I am forcing myself to look into it. I'm doing it because I have felt a lightening, have felt a kind of agency when upon finding a scar I sometimes didn't even know I had, I have been able to open it up and, by repositioning the stinging sides, reduce irritation.

Some people, most people, would ask why anyone would ever elect such surgery? Why examine old wounds, pick at scabs? Why begin a painful journey when you don't feel particularly bad, may even feel good? Why do it when everyone knows doing something else will make you feel better? Why not work 60-70 hours a week if you like it? I've told you my story. Can you tell me yours?

Leslie Kennedy is Language Arts Department Head at Mobile Central High.

Beyond the Bake Sale

Exposing the Many Faces of Commercialism in Public Schools

How many chocolate almonds does it take to buy an education? The underfunding of public education has forced schools and school communities to compensate in a variety of ways: door-to-door fundraising campaigns, advertising revenue, exclusive marketing contracts, and seeking donations or handouts from the private sector. Awareness of these activities has been largely anecdotal, up to now.

"The classroom is an environment like no other, a fact not lost on corporate marketers. They openly describe it as an ideal environment in which to reach the increasingly infuential consumer – students..."

The Canadian Teachers' Federation, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement (FSE is a member of the Quebec-based Centrale des syndicats du Québec) decided to undertake a national survey to collect data on a range of commercial activities in Canadian elementary and secondary public schools. The first of its kind in Canada, the survey now provides us with solid data about the scope of the commercial presence in our classrooms and the degree to which schools rely on outside funding sources, including school advertising, fundraising, user fees, and partnerships and sponsorships.

Among the study's findings (contained in the report *Commercialism in Canadian Schools: Who's Calling the Shots?*) are the following:

- About a third of schools reported the presence of advertising in or on the school, with higher rates in secondary schools than in elementary schools.
- 27% of schools had an exclusive marketing arrangement with Coke or Pepsi.
- The majority of schools reported charging user fees for a variety of services and programs.
- 15% of elementary schools and 21% of secondary schools reported selling services to generate revenue.
- Fundraising activities are common in schools, with money being raised for school trips, library books, athletic programs and technology; 60% of elementary schools reported fundraising for library books.
- Schools reported raising through fundraising and other activities including user fees, advertising revenue and partnerships/sponsorships amounts of money ranging from a few hundred dollars to, in some cases, several hundred thousand dollars.

The study raises some fundamental questions about the implications of commercialism and privatization for students, teachers, schools and public education as a whole.

When schools and communities have varying degrees of capacity to fundraise and attract outside funding, what is the impact on equity? Which students in which communities have access to programs enhanced by private funding, and which do not? As schools compete with each other for external funding (from corporations and individuals), how does education suffer? Do the time and other resources spent on fundraising detract from the quality of education schools can provide? To what extent does an over-reliance on private funding erode the decision-making authority of elected school boards? Are there strings attached to private funding and with what effects? Who ensures that curriculum and classroom materials provided by private sources are unbiased, complete and accurate? As schools are increasingly dependent on private funding sources, what happens in times of economic instability or dwindling corporate largesse, or when parents are unable to fundraise to the same extent?

The classroom is an environment like no other, a fact not lost on corporate marketers. They openly describe it as an ideal environment in which to reach this increasingly influential consumer group – students

– required by law to be in school, five days a week, six hours a day, 10 months of the year, until they reach the age of 16. The school also offers an implicit endorsement of products, organizations and messages associated with it.

Publicly-funded education, universally accessible and inclusive, is a societal responsibility instituted to provide equal opportunities for all children. Funding for this public good is an obligation of governments that set the mandate for schools through public policy. Non-public funding sources can compromise the ability of public schools to fulfill the goals set for them.

Some provincial governments and governments in other jurisdictions have taken steps to ban soft drinks or junk food in schools as part of their approach to addressing concerns about the health of children and youth. Others have banned advertising to children altogether (in Quebec, corporations cannot advertise to children aged 13 and under). But these measures are only part of a larger picture when it comes to the role of our public institutions, particularly schools.

One has to wonder if comments from governments about our commitment to the "knowledge economy" are predominantly rhetorical, particularly in light of how dependent schools are becoming in the absence of adequate public dollars on private funding sources.

While fundraising is hardly a new activity (ask yourself how many chocolate almonds you've bought to support your community school), the results of this first national survey indicate that school commercialism has clearly moved beyond bake sales and raffles, assuming many forms. They also demonstrate that the goals of these new fundraising campaigns are no longer just for band trips but for books, or desks, or yes, even bathroom facilities. These are hardly "frills" or "extras", but rather what most of us would consider part of a basic education.

For further information on this op-ed article, contact: Winston Carter, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation; Erika Shaker, Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Education Project; or Alain Pélissier, Secretary-Treasurer of Centrale des syndicats du Québec.

District Smoke-Free School Grounds Policy

As of September 1, 2006, all five school districts in Newfoundland and Labrador are implementing 100% Smoke-Free School Ground policies. There are numerous benefits to such a policy including: students, staff and others using the school grounds are not exposed to second-hand smoke; the policy will help to reduce student smoking rates; younger students are less pressured/influenced to try smoking, and; it helps to reduce undesirable activities such as bullying which can occur in designated smoking areas.

School smoking polices are a key component in an overall comprehensive plan to prevent and reduce youth smoking. Effective tobacco reduction programs at the school level combine smoke-free policies, smoking prevention activities, effective curriculum and support to help students stop smoking. To be successful, a district smoking policy requires more than banning smoking. It requires an implementarion plan at the school level to move the policy forward.

Developing a Policy Implementation Plan

Individual schools are in the best position to develop strategies to implement the smoke-free policy. Commitment to the policy is necessary to ensure effective implementation.

- Identify an existing committee at the school (e.g., Living Healthy Team) or create a Smoke-Free Team to be responsible for developing and implementing the plan. Be sure to include students, teachers, administrators, parents and community partners.
- Identify possible challenges to implementing the policy (e.g., school boundaries, neighbour's properties, safety, enforcement).
- Develop clear enforcement guidelines. Ensure there are written procedures for the steps to be taken when policy violations occur. (e.g., where and when tobacco in not allowed; who the policy applies to; what are the consequences for going against the policy, what resources are available to help implement the policy). It is important to be extra vigilant during the first few months of policy implementation.
- Ensure there is effective tobacco-use education/curriculum in grades K-12.
- Provide access to cessation programs to support student and staff efforts to quit smoking.
- Communicate the policy. All communications about the policy should be positive and should outline the rationale, stressing that the policy is part of the school's broader efforts to create a healthy school environment. Be sure to use clear and concise language. Indicate how the policy will be communicated to students, staff, parents, visitors and the general community. Indicate who to contact for questions on the policy and indicate where someone who wants to quit can find help.

Ideas for Communicating the Policy

- Smoke-free signage posted at all entrances and around school property using positive messages. Indoors you could use: *Welcome to Our Smoke-Free School! Proud to Provide a Healthy Environment for all.* Outdoor signs could read: *Smoke-Free Zone, not just a good idea...it's our school policy!*
- Engage students to present the policy to their peers.
- Post a copy of policy at school and on school website.
- Review policy at school assemblies/staff meetings.
- Include policy in student/staff agendas and parent newsletters.
- Display policy at curriculum and parent nights.
- Include policy in all rental agreements.
- Celebrate your school's Smoke-Free Policy by officially launching the policy.
- Encourage all to take pride in the policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the policy.

Resources and Supports

- Smoke-Free Spaces Activist Toolkit (CD-Rom)
- Smoking Prevention materials (Barb Tarbox video, *Science Tobacco and You*, Grade 7 Tobacco Prevention Resource, posters)
- Cessation programs (Kick the Nic, Quit for Life, Smokers Help Line)
- Web information (smokingsucks.ca, smokershelp.net)
- Community partners: Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT), Smokers Help Line, Lung Association, Cancer Society, Central Tobacco Awareness Coalition, Tobacco Free Network and Regional Wellness Coalitions
- Regional Health Authority: Public Health/School Nurses, Health Educators, School Health Promotion Liaison Consultants, Regional Wellness Consultants, Addictions and Mental Health Counsellors
- Department of Health and Community Services, Wellness Division; Department of Education; NLTA; School Councils

This article was prepared by Ellen Coady, Department of Education; Bernie Squires, Department of Health and Community Services; and Kevin Coady, Alliance for the Control of Tobacco.

Applying for Educational Leave

Academic Year 2007-08

Article 20 in the Collective Agreement (Article 31 in the Labrador West Agreement) establishes the parameters for paid educational leave. A "leave" is defined as one full university semester, with the exception of the spring semester/third term (May-June), which is considered a half-leave. While on paid educational leave, teachers receive 80 percent of their salary for the number of days their school is open during the university semester, plus two days before the semester begins and two days after it ends. This is to accomodate travel or other demands related to the educational leave. Thus, teachers may have to return to school prior to or after educational leave in any school term to avoid further loss of pay.

There are a total of **62.5** leaves available for teachers covered under the Provincial Collective Agreement; there are **3** leaves available for those teachers covered under the Labrador West Collective Agreement.

The Application Process:

- Teachers must be employed in this province for five years or more (by the end June 2007) to be eligible for paid educational leave for the 2007-08 school year.
- Application is made **to the District**, not directly to the Department of Education.
- Districts may rank applications according to District needs.
- Districts must forward applications to the Department of Education by February 1.
- **DISTRICTS OFTEN HAVE AN EARLIER DEADLINE. CHECK WITH YOUR DISTRICT OFFICE.**
- **Applications received after February 1 will not be considered.**

The Decision-Making Process:

- A committee with representation from the Department of Education, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association makes decisions on granting of awards.
- The committee makes its selections by March 1 of each year.
- Successful applicants are notified by March 30 by the Committee Chair, Mr. Gary Hatcher.
- In making its decision, the Committee considers several criteria including, but not limited to:
  - ✓ Whether the applicant has had paid leave in the past.
  - ✓ Current certificate level.
  - ✓ Whether study during leave will lead to a certificate upgrade.
  - ✓ Whether the applicant's job is at risk without re-training/upgrading.
  - ✓ The educational needs of the District and rankings as recommended by the Director.
  - ✓ Program of study (teacher supply and demand/program restrictions).*

No one factor of those listed in the above criteria dominates the Committee's final decision. Each member of the Committee, after thorough discussion of all the factors and after reviewing in detail the information on each applicant, has input to the final selection. Every effort is made to apply the criterion in a consistent fashion, and some aspects of the procedure may be computer assisted.

***If a successful applicant changes his/her planned program of study from that indicated on the original application, the application must be reconsidered by the Selection Committee.**

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

The full text on the NLTA policy regarding the awarding of Educational Leave as well as the Educational Leave Application Form can be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). A link on the main page called **"Forms Online"** will bring you to the applicable form and policy. Please note that the application form **must be forwarded to your School District** and from there it will be forwarded to: *Mr. Gary Hatcher, Senior Director, School Services and Facilities, Department of Education, Confederation Building, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6.* Application must be received at the Department of Education by **FEBRUARY 1, 2007**. ***Districts often have an earlier deadline. Check with your district office.***

ASSESSMENT LITERACY: ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING
December 4-5, 2006
St. John's. Sponsored by ASCD's Atlantic Canada Connected Community (ACCC). For further information contact: http://atlanticcanada.ascd.org.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR SEMINARS
Fall 2006/Winter 2007
McGill University, Montreal, QC. For information contact Donna Wilkinson, Program Assistant, Centre for Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education, 3700 McTavish, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2, Tel: 514-398-6961, Fax: 514-398-7436, donna.wilkinson@mcgill.ca, www.mcgill.ca/edu-integrated/cel/profdev/seminars.

ARTS WORK II CONFERENCE
May 2007
Corner Brook. A two-day provincial arts in education conference for teachers (K-12). Watch for more details in future issues of *The Bulletin*. Contact donnamills@gov.nl.ca.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL CONFERENCE
May 23-25, 2007
Terra Nova Golf Resort. Theme: *Instructional Leadership … and Other Duties as Assigned.* Contact: Rick Thorne, Random Island Academy, Tel: 709-547-2379 (s), Fax: 709-547-2549, richardthorne@esdnl.ca.

Dates to Remember

November 2006

Nov 15	**Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Australia, Britain and USA.
Nov 23	NLTA Executive Meeting
Nov 24-25	Joint Council Meeting
Nov 30	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's

December 2006

Dec 1	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
Dec 6	**Deadline:** Nominations for offices of President and Vice-President must be postmarked by this date for inclusion in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*
Dec 7-8	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
Dec 15	**Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Ontario

January 2007

Jan 7	**Final Deadline:** Nominations for NLTA President and Vice-President
Jan 11	**Deadline:** Proposed changes, amendments or repeal of by-laws for BGM 2007 must be received at NLTA office by this date
Jan 15	**Deadline:** 2007 Christmas Card Contest entries
Jan 15	**Deadline:** Receipt of Barnes, Bancroft, Allan Bishop, and Special Recognition Award Nominations at the NLTA office
Jan 18	**Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

February 2007

Feb 1	**Deadline:** Applications for Educational Leave – teachers must make prior application to school board
Feb 6	Election of NLTA President and Vice-President
Feb 11	**Deadline:** All remaining material for Convention issue of *The Bulletin* (nominations for Provincial Executive, resolutions for BGM, branch delegates and branch alternates' names) must be postmarked by this date for inclusion in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*
Feb 14	Janeway Day in the Schools
Feb 21-22	NLTA Executive Meeting
Feb 23-24	Joint Council Meeting

Important Notice for New Teachers

New Teacher Kits

If you HAVE NOT yet received your NLTA New Teacher Kit, please contact:

Susan Cardoulis
Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road
St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223, ext. 246 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free)
scardoulis@nlta.nl.ca

Free Software to Download!

The Virtual Teacher Centre has compiled a list of legitimately **FREE** software that you can download. These titles range from a complete suite of office tools to photo editing tools and teacher planning tools. Visit the VTC at **www.virualteachercentre.ca** and look for free software on the opening page!

If you know of other free titles, please let us know and we will add them to the list. Contact Alex Hickey: **ahickey@nlta.nl.ca**